

United States Attorney Southern District of New York

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EX-CEO SENTENCED TO 15 MONTHS IN PRISON FOR POSSESSION OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY AND OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and MARTIN D. FICKE, the Special Agent-in-Change of the New York Office of the Department of Homeland Security, Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE"), announced that ROBERT JOHNSON, 60, was sentenced to 15 months in prison today for possession of child pornography and for destroying computer records that were the subject of a federal investigation. United States District Judge RICHARD J. HOLWELL, who imposed the sentence, also ordered JOHNSON to pay a \$50,000 fine. Judge HOLWELL ordered that JOHNSON surrender to begin serving his sentence on February 2, 2007.

In imposing the sentence, Judge HOLWELL, recognized JOHNSON's exceptional service to the community, but concluded that a significant period of incarceration was necessary to reflect the seriousness of the crimes and deter others from committing similar offenses. Judge HOLWELL stated that possession of child pornography is "not a victimless crime because it supports and encourages a detestable subculture."

According to the charges, court papers, and statements made by JOHNSON during his guilty plea:

JOHNSON, the former Chief Executive Officer of a publicly traded company headquartered in New York City (the "Company"), knowingly possessed sexually-explicit photographs of children on a computer owned by the Company. JOHNSON obtained the illegal images by purchasing membership rights to websites that sold child pornography over a period of more than a year.

In May 2004, ICE agents learned that JOHNSON, using the

internet aliases "robjob714" and "jobobo55," had purchased memberships in websites believed to contain and distribute child pornography through a computer that the agents traced to the Company. On May 4, 2004, an ICE agent (the "ICE Agent") spoke to two executives of the Company and informed them that ICE was investigating usage of a Company computer to access Internet websites believed to contain and distribute child pornography without disclosing to the executives that JOHNSON specifically was being investigated. One of the executives told JOHNSON, in substance, that the Company had received an inquiry from federal authorities concerning use of a Company computer to access child pornography websites. After learning of the federal authorities' contact with the Company, JOHNSON used a computer program called "Evidence Eliminator" to destroy and obliterate more than 12,000 files from the hard disk drive of the desktop and laptop computers assigned to him by the Company.

On August 4, 2006, JOHNSON pleaded guilty to one count of possession of chid pornography and one count of destruction of documents in connection with a federal investigation.

Mr. GARCIA praised the efforts of the Department of Homeland Security, Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Assistant United States Attorney JOHN J. O'DONNELL is in charge of the prosecution.

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